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February 19, 1971

TO: ARA/BR - Mr. Ravndal  
FROM: ARA/BR - Robert W. Dean  
SUBJECT: Intelligence Memorandum on João Augusto de  
ARAÚJO CASTRO

FOIA(b)(1)

The real purpose of this memo is to add to the record the following statements made to me by Araujo Castro himself in an hour-and-a-half conversation I had with him in mid-1969 shortly after I took over as Country Director for Brazil. I was in New York at the time for a CLA meeting and paid a courtesy call on Araujo Castro at Brazil's UN Delegation's office. We discussed at length the last months of the Goulart Government, especially the period during which Araujo Castro served as Goulart's foreign minister. I asked the Ambassador

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whether he thought Goulart, in fact, intended to stay on as President beyond the planned 1965 election date and whether this intention may have explained the political suicide he in reality committed through his actions and inactions during the last months. Araujo Castro said that he was aware of no specific plot on the part of Goulart and his supporters to remain in power, but he felt that Goulart harbored a visceral feeling of "continuismo" which he never raised to the level of an actual plot to remain in power.

Ambassador Castro, recalling the famous Goulart political rally of March 13, 1964, told me that Goulart had requested that he invite the diplomatic corps to that meeting. Araujo Castro said he refused to do so on the grounds that such a meeting would be of domestic political concern and not a proper function for the attendance of foreign diplomats. In fact, he said, he told the President he himself could not attend that meeting. The meeting was attended by Goulart, his extreme left-wing brother-in-law, Leonel Brizola, and Oswaldo Pacheco, the Communist head of the stevedores union, and was the major political rally which touched off the reaction which led to Goulart's ouster.

Araujo Castro also told me that some three or four months following the downfall of the Goulart Government successor President Umberto Castello Branco invited him to be Brazil's Ambassador to Washington. Araujo Castro said that he turned this offer down on the grounds that it would not be in keeping with his previous association with the ousted Goulart Government and would be difficult to explain.

Mr. Fred Sacksteder, a Foreign Service Officer working with our UN delegation in New York, has told me more about Araujo Castro. First of all, he is a capable Brazilian representative who knows how to defend his country's interests. At the same time, he has a broad international background and viewpoint which permitted him to play an important international role, especially within the Latin American caucus, at the United Nations. He is a good negotiator and mediator, frequently

pulling together divergent opinions within the Latin American group and molding them into an acceptable compromise. He does his home work well and at the United Nations has regularly volunteered to do more of the hard work than would normally be expected of him. At the same time, he tends to play his cards close to his tummy and probably will be a less outgoing Ambassador in Washington than was his predecessor, Mozart Valente. He is a hard worker who does not care much for social obligations, although he participates in and sponsors the minimum necessary in this area.

I also gather that he has the respect of Foreign Minister Mario Gibson and is capable of standing up to him where the two men have different opinions. In a conversation I had with Gibson about his new ambassador to Washington, I had this impression reinforced. Given the sometimes volatile nature of Foreign Minister Gibson and his tendencies to make certain grandstand plays for political effect at home (such as his OAS walkout, his power play reversal of the results of the election to the Inter-American Juridical Committee and his sharp overreaction to Ambassador Elbrick's statement about the Curtiss Cutter kidnap attempt), this quality of Araujo Castro can be of great use to us. We can probably count on Araujo Castro, with his many years of experience in the United States, to be alert to U.S. reactions to developments in Brazil and to positions taken by the Brazilian government, and to report them faithfully to the Foreign Ministry with appropriate conclusions and recommendations. We may even be able to reinforce certain conclusions and recommendations knowing that they will be transmitted and probably heeded back at the home office.

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